



marshfield/scituate/norwell/cohasset

# Mariner

thursday, august 16, 1979

## Rival Weighs Ton, Barn-Beamed But...

# Sailor's Widow Loses To Siren Of Deep

By Nina Belsan

The sailor's widow, like golf and poker widows, shares a complaint common to all. The only difference being, instead of calling Harry's or the golf course to find her wandering husband, she searches the windy shore like a siren beckoning her sailor home.

But she might as well save her breath because the temptress in her man's life is too much competition for the loveliest landlubber.

The rival is really nothing to look at. She weighs a ton, and has a beam like the side of a barn. She moves with all the grace of Jackie Gleason at a smorgasbord and drinks more than a Trojan horse. Her sagging bottom is trussed with fiberglass and her hull has soaked up four coats of cosmetic varnish. Her turgid blue color required hours of surgical scraping and sanding before she was changed to a clean classic white.

She was christened the Nina. The Pinta and Santa Maria didn't have to claim kinship, her age revealed the secret. But to the mariner who was her faithful lover and companion, she was beautiful.

His fascination for the sea probably began during his first voyage when the prenatal Odysseus lay floating in the womb. By adulthood, he learned a more sophisticated means of passage in a craft more complex in design — one that moves and goes "putt

putt" and occasionally "I think I can, I think I can."

Before long the mariner's mania for the sea and his floating mistress become so obsessive that he wears his captain's hat and Docksidiers at all times, just in case she calls.

It doesn't take much for him to get the urge to visit her at her private berth. He gets itchy fins brushing his teeth and gargling, or floating his little rubber ducky on a bar of soap.

### Tubby III...



### ...But Tantalizing

When she was seaworthy (an expression I've never fully understood but hoped meant fit to travel), she was outfitted and rigged for her first voyage. It was to be a family fishing trip.

A lunch, towels and extra cloths were packed and fishing gear and bait awaited the eager anglers' first nibble. The captain's mate took the precaution to include salt water pills, emergency flares, a deflated raft and an extra large beach towel marked "SOS."

The children were well into the bologna sandwiches before we'd left our snug harbor. I knoshed on my Dramamine. By the time we stopped to fish, I was wondering what land cost in the Sahara Desert.

The crew, each one secured with a life preserver and a safety line attached to the first mate's belt, dropped their lines and proceeded to fish.

Unfortunately I couldn't fish due to the fact that I had somehow snagged a sailboat on our way out of the harbor. What was left of my 100-pound test line I used to tie myself to the mast.

But I enjoyed the day in spite of myself. I actually took a swim overboard and became an expert in removing fish hooks — a necessity since three were stuck in my person.

From that time on, I became a contented sailor's widow. They stayed out all day covorting on the briny and left me high and dry on the shore.

And that's just the way I like it.



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